

# HONORING THOSE LOST IN THE JOINT TASK FORCE FOR FULL ACCOUNTING HELICOPTER CRASH

Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire. Mr. President, in early April, April 6 to be exact, the Senate recessed. The following day, April 7, a Saturday, a helicopter, in the fog, crashed into the side of a mountain in Vietnam. In that crash, seven American military personnel were killed as were nine Vietnamese. It is a grim yet a vivid reminder of the fact that every day American servicemen throughout the world are serving their country in harm's way. Even though the Nation is not at war, we sometimes forget these men and women put their lives on the line for us.

I want to share with the Senate what these men were doing. These men were searching for the remains of American missing personnel, MIAs from the Vietnam war. These young men volunteered for this job and put their lives on the line to find answers for the families of those who are missing.

In a statement issued April 7 by the National Alliance of Families expressing their sympathy to the families, the National Alliance of Families said:

We extend our sincere condolences to the families of these service members and hope they will be comforted by the fact that their loved ones will always be remembered for their commitment to finding our loved ones.

I just came back about 45 minutes ago from a memorial service at Fort Myer for those seven Americans and their nine Vietnamese counterparts. To sit there with some of the families of those missing was difficult. But, again, it is a reminder of what these men and women in uniform do, all across the world. I honor them today in the Senate by letting the American people know who they are. These are not anonymous people; these are real people with, now, real grieving widows, real grieving mothers and fathers.

The members on board were members of the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy. To be specific, there were three members of the U.S. Army, three members of the U.S. Air Force, and one Navy personnel. They were black, they were Hispanic, they were Caucasian—they were Americans. They were American military. They were: Army LTC Rennie Melville Cory, Jr., of Oklahoma City, OK; LTC George D. Martin III of Hopkins, SC; and SFC Tommy James Murphy of Georgia—hometown not available; they were Air Force MAJ Charles E. Lewis of Las Cruces, NM; MSG Steven L. Moser of San Diego, CA; and TSgt Robert M. Flynn of Huntsville, AL; they were Navy CPO Pedro Juan Gonzalez of Buckeye, AZ—real people, real Americans.

I used to teach high school, and oftentimes I would be amazed at the heroes some of our young people sought out—many in the athletic world, some

in the world of entertainment, some whom I might not have picked as heroes. But if you are looking for heroes to admire, here they are, seven of them, who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty to search for the remains of American men and women missing from the Vietnam war. What an honor to serve your country in that capacity.

At least five times that I can recall, I as a Member of either the Congress or the Senate had the opportunity to visit Vietnam—indeed, fly on maybe the same helicopter, but certainly similar helicopters with Vietnamese pilots. We flew all over Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, flying these missions, trying to find answers for POWs and MIAs. These wonderful people who make these sacrifices—long days, weeks away from their families, on the ground, sifting through dirt, trying to find remains, looking at wreckage, digging into the files and the archives—whatever it takes, they are out there doing it day in and day out with very few accolades.

I honor them today by simply saying thank you. Thank you for caring enough to search for your colleagues and comrades in arms who are missing. Thank you for serving your country. Thank you for making the ultimate sacrifice doing it. I also thank the families, those who survive, who will now endure this pain.

It is special with me because I have also endured it. When I was 3 years old my father, who served in World War II, died in the service of his country in a military aircraft accident. My mother, as a widow, raised me and my brother for all those years.

These are heroes. These were members of what is called the Joint Task Force—Full Accounting. I ask all of us, my colleagues in the Senate and the American people who are listening, tonight, when you put your head down, you might just remember these men in your prayers and say thank you from a grateful nation for your service.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

## THE EDUCATION BILL

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I know there have been a number, more or less, of opening statements or statements with regard to education in America in the hope that we can move forward on a very important education reform bill that has been requested by President Bush and has been worked on in our Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee. The bill was re-

ported out overwhelmingly some months ago.

At that point, negotiations began between Republicans on the committee, Democrats on the committee, and the administration. I had the impression that good progress had been made. That is as it should be. Education is a very high priority in America with the President and with the Congress but, most importantly, with the American people.

I have stated in this Chamber many times before how importantly I view education. In my State of Mississippi, we are struggling mightily to improve the quality of our education to make sure that quality education is available to all of our students. We are truly working on the idea that no child should be left behind.

We had a \$100 million contribution from Jim and Sally Barksdale for fourth grade reading only in my State.

We are now at a point where we have 50 schools that have been approved for the Power-Up Program where students from the fifth grade to the eighth grade have access to privately donated computers with specifically trained teachers on how to teach these children to use them to learn to read. This program allows them to become computer literate and improve their reading skills.

Now we have unique programs in my State for fourth graders, and fifth through the eighth grade for reading alone. We are focusing on where there is a tremendous need. That story can be replicated all across America.

In addition to that, I am a son of a schoolteacher. She taught for 19 years before she got into bookkeeping and eventually into radio announcing. So I care a lot about education.

I worked for the University of Mississippi in placement and in the financial office for the alumni association and for the law school placement bureau. I have been involved in working with guidance counselors and teachers and promoting education generally. I care mightily about this.

As a Member of Congress for 29 years, I have watched us try to have a constructive role from the Federal level with the States and local school officials. We have put billions of dollars into trying to be helpful from the Federal level. The number is well over \$130-plus billion for title I since I think 1965.

As we poured more and more money from the Federal level into local education, the test scores have continued to slide downward. There is something missing. Money alone is not the answer. Money is part of the answer. We need to put more funds at the local, State, and Federal level into education, but we need more than that. We need fundamental reform. We need flexibility. We need accountability. We need to make sure the children are